Withdrawal of floor price of steel

*51. SHRI DINA NATH MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons as to why the floor price of steel has been withdrawn with effect from 31st December, 1999, while the Steel Industry is almost making the same level of losses;

(b) whether the Commerce Ministry is going to come out with Export Securitisation in large volumes;

(c) whether there is any proposal for Export Securitisation from the companies producing steel; and

(d) how many proposals arc pending in the Commerce Ministry and how long?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) Floor price mechanism was introduced as a temporary measure to provide the domestic steel industry a level playing field and to regulate cheap imports during a period of rapidly falling international prices. Since the international prices of Steel have now stabilised, the domestic steel industry should be able to withstand the competition.

There is no proposal under consideration regarding undertaking of export securitisation in large volumes by the Commerce Ministry. There is only one proposal received from a company producing steel by the Ministry in February, 1999.

Non-Collection of data on Disabled in the Census 2001

*52. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Disabled angry at non-inclusion" in the Hindustan Times, dated 31st January, 2000 (New Delhi); and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has always been concerned about collecting accurate data on the number of disabled persons in the country. Data on disability was

collected in 1981 Census. The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment have taken up the issue of collection of disability data through the 2001 Census from 1997 onwards with the concerned authorities. We have also offered to provide training to enumerators to be used for this purpose. However, in view of the technical difficulties in collecting accurate disability data in the 1981 Census, the Registrar General & Census Commissioner as well as the Ministry of Home Affairs are of the view that Census is not the right medium for collecting reliable data on disability. It has, therefore, been decided to request the Department of Statistics to direct National Sample. Survey Organisation (NSSO) to undertake a comprehensive sample survey to collect data on the incidence of disability as was done earlier in 1991.

Permission for Foreign Investment in Print Media

*53. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to permit entry of foreign investment in the print media;

(b) if so, whether the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) have expressed serious concern on such permission;

(c) if so, whether Government have assessed the impact on indigenous print media of the foreign investments;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what other steps would be taken to save the indigenous print media?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No Sir.

(b) The Indian Newspaper Society has strongly opposed the entry of foreign newspapers/periodicals in India.

(c) to (e) In view of the reply to (a) the question does not arise.

Provision of funds for Urban/Rural Development in Himachal Pradesh

*54. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of towns and villages in Himachal Pradesh to which funds